

Remarks

At present claims 1-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) based upon the patent to Hu (U.S. Patent Number 5,586,260 issued on December 17, 1996). In light of the modifications made to applicants' claim 1 and the remarks presented herein, this rejection is respectfully traversed.

Preliminarily, it is noted that applicants have added a system claim and a program product claim that exactly track the currently amended claim 1. Accordingly, no new matter is presented in newly added claims 9 and 10. Furthermore, no new searchable matter is added in these claims. In particular, the scope of any required search for applicants' claims 9 and 10 is completely commensurate with the search scope set out for applicants' currently amended claim 1.

With respect to any rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102, it is noted that this is a narrow ground of rejection. It requires each and every recited claim element to be present within the four corners of a single cited document. With respect to the patent to Hu it is noted in particular that applicants' last recited claim element, namely that of providing at least one adapter module for each security program module, is a step which is neither disclosed nor suggested by the patent to Hu. It is noted however that this is not the only significant difference between that which is claimed and that which is brought by Hu. In particular, it is noted that the patent to Hu is directed to solving an entirely different problem than that which is solved by the present invention. In this regard, it is noted that the patent to Hu does not in any way appreciate the particular problem that was solved by the present invention.

It is noted that the patent to Hu is directed to the problem of authentication in a client/server environment when the client and server have different security mechanisms. This is not the case in the present invention. Hu contemplates that a client application has one form of security mechanism and a server application has another form of security mechanism.

Accordingly, Hu is directed to the situation in which already existing security mechanisms which are different are required for client/server interactions.

In contrast, applicants' invention is directed to situations in which a variety of security mechanisms are present on each one of a plurality of data processing nodes. By providing an access program layer which presents a consistent security interface, it is rendered possible for application programs to access selected security program modules on different nodes. More particularly, in the operation of applicants' claimed invention, it is contemplated that the same security mechanism is being used on both nodes. This is particularly indicated in the amendments made to applicants' claim 1 herein which are intended to more particularly point out this aspect of the claimed invention.

In the environment in which the invention of Hu operates the requirement and the assumption is that the client and server have different security mechanisms. If this were not the case, there would be no need for the invention in Hu. In contrast, in the present application the environment and the assumption is that this security mechanism for the client and the server is the same. However, in the present invention options are made available to the application program which renders it capable of utilizing different security mechanisms without having to be reprogrammed.

Furthermore, the operation of the invention in Hu requires the use and presence of a third party, namely an authentication gateway. The client logs into the authentication gateway and provides a user name and password (Hu's abstract). In the present invention there is no requirement for a log-in or a password to be sent to a third party device or function.

In the present invention, since the client application and the server application are each accessing the same security mechanism (security program module), the need for an

authentication gateway is not present. Furthermore, not only is it not present, it is decidedly unneeded and unnecessary. Nonetheless, it is a required part of the invention in Hu.

Correspondingly, in the invention discussed in the patent to Hu, the client and server employ different security mechanisms and accordingly, a gateway is required. Accordingly, it is seen that those of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Hu before them, would not be lead to employ a structure in which only a single security mechanism is present. In point of fact, it is seen that in accordance with the teachings of Hu, the presence of only a single security mechanism completely and entirely obviates the need for their invention. Those of ordinary skill in the art, following the teachings of Hu, would be required to employ different security mechanisms and employ a gateway. They would see the presence of the same security mechanism as being a non-problem. In contrast, in applicants' claimed invention the presence of multiple security mechanisms, even though the same mechanism is being used by a client and server application, is seen to be a problem. In particular, in applicants' teachings, it is the plurality of options for security mechanisms which provide challenges to those writing application level programs. It is this problem which is in particular addressed and solved by applicants' access program layer.

For all of the above reasons, it is seen that applicants' claims, particularly as amended, are not in anyway either anticipated or rendered obvious by the teachings of Hu. It is therefore respectfully requested that the rejection of applicants' claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102 be withdrawn.

It is noted that the present amendments are being made as of right. It is also noted that the present response does not require the payment of any additional fees except for the payment of the fee for a one-month extension of time which was necessitated by applicants' attorney being involved in other pressing matters.

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No amendment made was related to the statutory requirements of patentability unless expressly stated herein. No amendment made was for the purpose of narrowing the scope of any claim, unless applicants have argued herein that such amendment was made to distinguish over a particular cited document or combination of documents.

Accordingly, it is now seen that all of the applicants' claims are in condition for allowance. Therefore, early notification of the allowability of applicants' claims is earnestly solicited. Furthermore, if there are any other matters which the Examiner feels could be expeditiously considered and which would forward the prosecution of the instant application, applicants' attorney wishes to indicate his willingness to engage in any telephonic communication in furtherance of this objective. Accordingly, applicants' attorney may be reached for this purpose at the numbers provided below.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Date

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